



CHANGING METHODS & PATTERNS OF STUDY AMONG MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES

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ABSTRACT

Background: This article examines study patterns among medical undergraduates. **Material & Method:** A cross sectional study was carried out in 600 students of Rural Medical College, Loni. Stratified random Sampling method was used to select randomly select 50 boys and girls among (I, II, III, III/II and Interns) respectively. Written informed consent was taken. A semi structured questionnaire was developed and filled by the students. Descriptive statistical analysis was done using percentage values. Correlation and strength of association was determined by spearman's rank correlation. **Results:** Majority, 456 (76%) students felt they retained audio-visual data better than reading textbooks. COVID pandemic may also alter their study habits in short term as well as long term. **Conclusion:** Changing trends in how students prefer to study need to be taken into account while teaching them. Not all trends are positive. Habits like frequent phone browsing and reliance on unverified online study material must be discouraged.

KEYWORDS :

INTRODUCTION

Being successful as a medical student requires careful and effective utilization of time. The term 'study' refers to the amount of time spent on any academic-related activities. The number of hours per week by individual students will vary according to many factors including academic background, academic ability, study techniques, and the level of performance the student wishes to attain in a particular program. Whether students attend college by choice or necessity, it can be a challenging experience. If they do not pace themselves they are likely to face burnouts.¹

Study skills encompasses a wide variety of activities including setting realistic goals, employing appropriate note-taking and test-taking strategies, self-testing, managing time and anxiety, as well as selecting an appropriate study habit and environment.² Students need to be self-motivated and self-disciplined in order to successfully complete courses. This article examines study patterns among medical undergraduates.

MATERIAL & METHOD

A cross sectional study was carried out in 600 students of Rural Medical College, Loni. Stratified random Sampling method was used to select randomly select 50 boys and girls among (I, II, III, III/II and Interns) respectively. Written informed consent was taken. A semi structured questionnaire was developed and filled by the students. Descriptive statistical analysis was done using percentage values. Correlation and strength of association was determined by spearman's rank correlation.

Table 1: Stratified Random Sampling

	I MBBS	II MBBS	III MBBS	III/II MBBS	Interns	Total
Males	50	50	50	50	50	300
Females	50	50	50	50	50	300
Total	100	100	100	100	100	600

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

We found majority, 456 (76%) students felt they retained audio-visual data better than reading textbooks. Similar findings were observed by Shabiralyani G et al.³ Female students spent more time studying than male students. On an average, female students performed better in academics than male students ($\rho=0.456$, $p<0.001$). Study by Menaldi SL showed similar findings.² Only 108 (18%) students study regularly. There was correlation between regularity of study and academic performance ($\rho=0.546$, $p<0.001$). Baviskar et al. found that living away from house and uncertainty regarding prospects can adversely affect learning.^{4,5} Ali G. has also reached similar conclusions in his study.⁶ Browsing mobile while studying was done by 504 (84%) of students. This adversely impacts retention while studying. A separate time should be designated for browsing and it should be discouraged during reading.

First and final year students studied longer than Second year students. This might be due to variable distribution of timeframe for each year as first year in India has 2 semesters, while the second has three semesters prior to university exams. The new competency based curriculum has reduced the duration of second year. Whether this alters the pattern of student engagement in second year remains to be seen. We found that there is a trend towards studying with an aim to clear post graduate medical entrance exams than to acquire skills.

An effective studying strategy requires development of personalized study skills to improve ability to retain, reflect, reproduce and research information at the college level. In order to meet these needs different students have developed different study habits and environments.⁹ There is no perfect study pattern template that applies to all students.

Medical students should understand the importance of

personalized study patterns and studying on a consistent basis instead of frequent procrastination in order to achieve their career goals. COVID pandemic may also alter their study habits in short term as well as long term.¹⁰ This article evaluates study patterns among medical college students.

CONCLUSION

Changing trends in how students prefer to study need to be taken into account while teaching them. Not all trends are positive. Habits like frequent phone browsing and reliance on unverified online study material must be discouraged.

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